



# Abhinaya News

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## PERFORMANCES IN INDIA BY MYTHILI KUMAR & ABHINAYA DANCE COMPANY

The 2003 season began with performances by Mythili Kumar and Abhinaya Dance Company in Chennai on January 5th, 9th and 10th as part of the annual so-called "mad" music and dance season that enlivens Chennai during the months of December and January.



For Hamsadhwani's NRI Festival on the 5th of January, 2003 in Indira Nagar, Adyar, they performed excerpts from 'Divya Naama Anjali' featuring items on several deities, including Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman's Devi Varnam (Angaiyar Kanni). The dancers from Abhinaya Dance Company were; Rasika Kumar, Preeti Vissa, Madhav Vissa, Sonia Bose, Priya Krishnamoorthy, and Mythili Kumar. Orchestra support was given by vocalist Smt. Jayanthi Mohan, mridangist Shri Shaktivel, flautist Kum. Bhagyalakshmi, violinist Shri T. K. Padmanabhan, and nattuvangam by Malavika Kumar.

A second performance was presented on January 9<sup>th</sup> at the same venue for a government delegation by Mythili Kumar and Rasika Kumar. The concerts were well attended by local dance gurus, and friends and relatives of the company dancers. On January 10<sup>th</sup>, Mythili Kumar and Rasika Kumar performed for Bharath Kalachar's Margazhi Festival at Shri YGP Auditorium in T-Nagar. The orchestra comprised of vocalist Smt. Jayanthi Mohan, Mridangist Shri Vishwanathan, Flautist Kum. Bhagyalakshmi, violinist Shri T. K. Padmanabhan, and nattuvangam by Shri Vijayaraghavan. They presented excerpts from 'Samsara-the web of life', including the story of Karaikkal Ammaiyaar. The presence of the famous vocalist Shri T. V. Sankaranarayan, as well as noted dance gurus Smt. Kalanidhi Narayanan, Shri C.V. Chandrasekhar, and Smt. Shantha and Shri V.P. Dhananjayan in the audience made it a worthwhile trip for all the participants.

## 'SURYA - THE SUN -GOD'

Abhinaya Dance Company started the Spring season with a performance of 'Surya-the sun-god' weaving together the various legends surrounding the Sun God. The theme was given to Artistic Director Mythili Kumar by Shantha Raman, incidentally, Abhinaya's board of directors' first Chairperson in 1990. Surya was performed to an almost sold-out audience at Louis B Meyer Theater, Santa Clara University on March 15, 2003, and at Julia Morgan Theater, Berkeley on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The performance at Berkeley was greatly appreciated by dance aficionados of Berkeley. Abhinaya dancers were Mythili Kumar, Radhika Kannan, Satyasri Yendluri, Sonya Bose, Vidhya Balu, Anu Ranganathan, Sindhu Natarajan, Devika Ajaya, and Malavika Kumar.

Following is the review by Rupal Shah of India West.



The Abhinaya Dance Company of San Jose presented its spring 2003 concert performance of "Surya" on March 16 at the Julia Morgan Center for the Arts. Mythili Kumar, artistic director for the ADC, and dancers at the company presented a stunning two-hour performance of variations of the manifestation of Surya, the sun god.

The dances included Bharatanatyam and Odissi styles that ranged from stories of the Mahabharata and Ramayana to odes by Subramania Bharati.

Surya is known in Indian mythology as the source and sustainer of all life on earth. Beginning with this idea and weaving in its various manifestations and legends into seven-segment production, the ADC's performances were skilled, poised and emotional, and carried a momentum that retained the liveliness and beauty of the stories behind them.

Beginning with the 'Gayatri Mantra' and the 'Surya Namaskar,' the dancers set the tone and praised the sun as the supreme divinity as well as the inner self.

Another segment featured the premiere of a dance to the famous poem to the sun, written by Subramania Bharati, and the finale, a fast paced 'thillana' was danced to the melodic raga 'surya' composed by Asha Ramesh, who provided all the vocals for the performance. Other segments included a 'pallavi', a slowly developing piece through a succession of phases in which the rhythmic variations become more complex as does the raga, and a prayer to Lord Jagannatha, performed in the Odissi style of dance by Asako Takami and Chaittee Sengupta.

Asha Ramesh's vocal portion for the performance added a rich and powerful layer to the pieces, as did the musical accompaniment, which included Shanti Narayanan on the violin, N. Narayanan on the mridangam, Raja Sivamani on the Veena and Malavika Kumar on the nattuvangam.

### CRISP AND ENJOYABLE-SPRING RECITAL



On Saturday, May 17 2003, students of Abhinaya participated in a Spring Recital at Mexican Heritage Theater, San Jose. It was a well attended performance. More than 60 students performed showcasing their talent at various levels in a professional theater setting. Some remarks were, "A thoroughly enjoyable student showcase .. we left that night feeling good! ", and one person said, "it was an amazing show and Abhinaya is unique".

### ABHINAYA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Chairperson:** Raju Ananth

**Treasurer:** Bhaskar Vissa

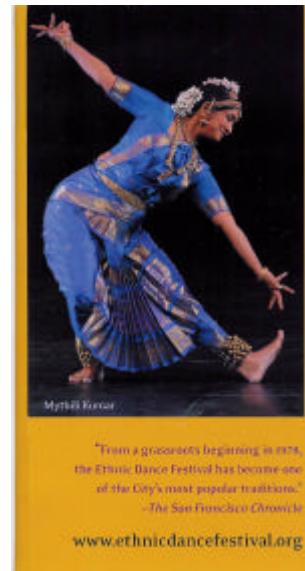
**Secretary:** Sreekala Sripathy

**Members:** Priya Dharan, G.S Satya, Ramarao Yendluri, Ranjani Chandramouli, Ann Malmuth-Onn, and Sharada Moorthy-Sripadam, Kamal Nair, Jaya Leslie

We would like to take this opportunity to thank board members for their valuable time and support.

### ETHNIC DANCE FESTIVAL – 2003

Abhinaya performs on June 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>



This year, World Arts West is celebrating two and a half decades of presenting world Dance and Music through the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival held annually in June. This year's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations features over 400 dancers and musicians on the stage of the Palace of Fine Arts from June 7 – June 22, and we are proud to announce that Mythili Kumar and Abhinaya Dance Company have been invited to participate in this celebration and we will be performing on June 14<sup>th</sup> @ 2 pm & 8 pm and on June 15<sup>th</sup> @ 2pm.

For Tickets:By phone 415-392-4400 Online

[www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com) or [www.tickets.com](http://www.tickets.com)

All performances are at THE PALACE OF FINE ARTS For more information visit: [www.ethnicdancefestival.org](http://www.ethnicdancefestival.org)

### SAD NEWS - COLUMBIA TRAGEDY

**Kalpna Chawla**, an astronaut aboard the shuttle Columbia that crashed on February 1, 2003, was a student of Abhinaya when she was living here in California prior to joining the astronaut program in Houston. Having learnt the basic adavu fundamentals from Jyoti Lakkaraju who was teaching with Abhinaya at that time, she went on to perform at a student recital as well as performed in Abhinaya's production 'My Favorite Story' 1993. She performed an Abhang (Marathi bhajan) with her colleagues, several of whom were engineers like her sharing her enthusiasm for learning this ancient, fascinating and exacting art. During her first flight into space, she requested an Abhinaya T-shirt to carry with her as a memento and shortly thereafter returned it to us with the phrase 'Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram' and her signature on it. While we have proudly displayed it at our past shows, little did we realize that her life on earth would be cut short so tragically. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to her family.



### FALL SCHEDULE

Classes will resume after the Labor Day weekend on September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003. Information will be mailed to students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of August.

### UPCOMING ARANGETRAMS

**June 29, 2003 - Nisha Patel** is a senior in high school and has been learning Bharatanatyam for over eight years. She has participated in several community events and in Abhinaya's productions since 1996. She will be joining the University of California in Davis in the fall.

**July 27, 2003 - Devika Ajaya** has completed her high-school diploma and has been learning Bharatanatyam for over six years. She has assisted as a teacher and participates actively in all Abhinaya's public school demonstration-performances.

**August 30, 2003 – Sindhu Natarajan**

**September 7, 2003 – Ameya Ananth**

**September 21, 2003 - Sheetal Shukla & Ramya Babu** will be performing their arangetram on September 21, 2003 and they both are juniors at Saratoga High School.

Sindhu Natarajan (sophomore) Ameya Ananth (sophomore), Ramya Babu (junior) have been learning Bharatanatyam for nine years and have participated in Abhinaya's productions since 1996.

Sheetal Shukla, also a junior, started learning Bharatanatyam at a young age and has studied with Mythili Kumar for the past five years.

### OTHER STUDENT INFORMATION

**Rasika Kumar** led a group of dancers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, restaging Mythili Kumar's choreography of 'Six gods-Deva Stuti' for the India Culture show held in April 2003. Rasika heads the MIT Natya Club which holds an annual Natyanjali Festival in September. Several Abhinaya dancers, including **Anupama Ananth** and **Pratheepa Sivaswaroopan** participated in a similar event at the University of California, Berkeley, while **Preeti Vissa** danced under renowned dancer Viji Prakash's direction at the UCLA event.

### CONGRATULATIONS

**Congratulations to Kamal Nair**, who was awarded a prestigious Community Service Award from AAHOA for 2003. Kamal Nair has

served on Abhinaya Dance Company's Board since 1990 and has been a dedicated and tireless volunteer for numerous productions from the 1980s to the present. She has received several awards for outstanding community service, particularly for her work with the AASRA project. She was recently nominated for a Martin Luther King award for outstanding services to the community in March 2003.



**Congratulations to Padmini Srikantiah**, a former student and company member of Abhinaya, who also appeared on the cover page of the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival program in the 1980's...on her marriage to Puneet Dhawan on Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 at Hindu Temple, Livermore.

**Congratulations to Ami Buch**, company member and teacher who will be getting married to Amit Majmudar on June 6<sup>th</sup>., 2003.

**Congratulations to Vineeta Menon** a former student who will be getting married to David Watson in September 2003.

**Congratulations to Priya (Tina) Saraf**, a former student who will be getting married to Atul Wokhulu on July 19, 2003.

### GRADUATING SENIORS

**Malavika Kumar** is the daughter of Mythili Kumar and has been her student since 1990. She has performed in many of Abhinaya Dance Company's productions in the Bay Area since 1992. She performed her arangetram in July 1998 and has performed nattuvangum for her mother and Abhinaya Dance Company in recent performances. She will be attending the University of California at Berkeley in the fall.

**Vidhya Balu** performed her arangetram in September 2002 and has participated in Abhinaya productions since 1996. She has also assisted as a teacher and has demonstrated her special ability to impart her knowledge to both adult students and younger children. Vidya will be attending Boston University in the fall.

**Ragini Srinivasan** performed her arangetram with Abhinaya in July 2000. She has performed in Abhinaya's productions since 1994 and has also narrated for Abhinaya's shows. She will be attending Duke University as a prestigious AB scholar in the fall. **Nisha Patel** will be performing her arangetram in June 2003 and has participated in Abhinaya productions since 1996. She will be joining the University of California, at Davis in the fall.

**Sahasini Chandramouli, Anjana Sundaram, and Kalpana Sundaram** have studied Bharatanatyam for over seven years and hope to perform their arangetrams in the near future. While Sahasini will be joining the University of California, Berkeley in the fall, the twins, Anjana and Kalpana will be joining the University of Chicago.

## 2003 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION	VENUE	CITY
January 5/9	Hamasadhwani's NRI Festival	Indira Nagar	Adyar, Chennai
January 10	Bharath Kalachar's Margazhi Festival	Shri YGP Auditorium	T-Nagar, Chennai
January 12	Thai Pongal performance	Shiva Murugan Temple	Concord
January 26	Family Sunday performance	San Jose Museum of Art -Wendell Ctr	San Jose
February 2	Arangetram-Saraswati Ranganathan	Mexican Heritage Theatre	San Jose
February 12	Young Audiences of San Jose Lecture Demo	Santa Rita School	Los Altos
<b>March 15</b>	<b>Spring Concert 'Surya-the sun god'</b>	<b>Louis B. Meyer Theater</b>	<b>Santa Clara</b>
<b>March 16</b>	<b>Spring Concert 'Surya-the sun god'</b>	<b>Julia Morgan Theater</b>	<b>Berkeley</b>
March 19	Arts Express	Children's Discovery Museum	San Jose
April 5	Rama Navami Celebrations	St. Timothy's Episcopal Church	Mountain View
<i>April 17</i>	<i>Lecture-Demo -World Music Course</i>	<i>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</i>	<i>Cambridge, MA</i>
April25/May4	National Dance Week		
<b>April 25</b>	<b>Open House – Dancing Technique</b>	<b>Studio 10 Dance</b>	<b>San Jose</b>
<b>April 27</b>	<b>Danc'in Downtown</b>	<b>San Jose Museum of Art - Wendell Ctr</b>	<b>San Jose</b>
April 29	Discovery Day	Garden Gate Elementary School	Cupertino
May 02	Young Audiences of San Jose Lecture Demo	Majestic Way School	San Jose
<b>May 03</b>	<b>"Dancin' the World 'Round"</b>	<b>Mexican Heritage Plaza</b>	<b>San Jose</b>
<b>May 17</b>	<b>Spring Recital</b>	<b>Mexican Heritage Theater</b>	<b>San Jose</b>
May 17-24	Valley Christian Dance Arts	Valley Christian Theater	San Jose
May 21	Young Audiences of San Jose Lecture Demo	Robert Randall School	Milpitas
May 26	Multi Cultural Festival	San Jose History Museum at Kelly Park	San Jose
May 27	Multi Cultural Festival	Live Oak High School	Morgan Hill
May 29	Young Audiences of San Jose Lecture Demo	Joseph Weller School	Milpitas
May 30	Intel Corporation - Employee celebrations	The Mountain Winery	Saratoga
June 1	Grant-in Aid -Abhinaya Performance	Shiva- Vishnu Temple	Livermore
June 10	Young Audiences of San Jose Lecture Demo	Santa Rita School	Los Altos
June 11	Performance On Employee Day	William & Flora Hewlett Foundation	Palo Alto
<b>June 14</b>	<b>Ethnic Dance Festival 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</b>	<b>Palace of Fine Arts</b>	<b>San Francisco</b>
<b>June 15</b>	<b>Ethnic Dance Festival 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</b>	<b>Palace of Fine Arts</b>	<b>San Francisco</b>
June 29	Arangetram-Nisha Patel	Center for Education and Training	San Jose
July 27	Arangetram-Devika Ajaya	Center for Education and Training	San Jose
August 30	Arangetram-Sindhu Natarajan	Spangenberg Theater	Palo Alto
September 07	Arangetram-Ameya Ananth	Louis B Meyer Theater	Santa Clara
September 21	Arangetram- Ramya Babu & Sheetal Shukla	West Valley College	Saratoga
October TBA	Vijaya Dasami - Performance	Amphitheater	Monte Sereno
<b>November 22</b>	<b>Fall Concert 2003</b>	<b>Mexican Heritage Theater</b>	<b>San Jose</b>



***Abhinaya Dance Company of San Jose***

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